Under the Red Robe

By STANLEY J. WEYMAN

CHAPTER I.

AT ZATON'S.

"Marked cards!"

There were a score round us when the fool, little knowing the man with whom he had to deal, and as little how to lose like a gentleman, flung the words in my teeth. He thought, I'll be sworn, that I should storm and swear and ruffle it like any common cock of the hackle. But that was never Gil de Berault's way. For a few seconds after he had spoken I did not even look at him. I passed my eye instead—smiling, bien entendu—round the ring of waiting faces, saw that there was no one except De Pombal I had cause to fear; and then at last I rose and looked at the fool with the grim face I have known impose on older and wiser men.

"Marked cards, M. l'Anglais?" I said, with a chilling sneer. "They are used, I am told, to trap players—not unbirched schoolboys."

"Yet I say that they are marked!" he replied hotly, in his queer foreign jargon. "In my last hand I had nothing. You doubted the stakes. Bah, Sir, you knew! You have swindled me!"

"Monsieur is easy to swindle—when he plays with a mirror behind him," I answered tartly. And at that there was a great roar of laughter, which might have been heard in the street, and which brought to the table every one in the eating-house whom his violence had not already attracted. But I did not relax my face. I waited until all was quiet again, and then waiving aside two or three who stood between us and the entrance, I pointed gravely to the door. "There is a little space behind the church of St. Jacques, M. l'Etranger," I said, putting on my hat and taking my cloak on my arm. "Doubtless you will accompany me thither?"

He snatched up his hat, his face burning with shame and rage. "With pleasure!" he blurted out. "To the devil, if you like!"

I thought the matter arranged, when the marquis laid his hand on the young fellow's arm and checked him. "This must not be," he said, turning from him to me with his grand fine gentleman's air. "You know me, M. de Berault. This matter has gone far enough."

"Too far, M. de Pombal!" I answered bitterly. "Still, if you wish to take the gentleman's place, I shall raise no objection."

"Chut, man!" he retorted, shrugging his shoulders negligently. "I know you, and I do not fight with men of your stamp. Nor need this gentleman."

"Undoubtedly," I replied, bowing low, "if he prefers to be caned in the streets."

That stung the marquis. "Have a care! have a care!" he cried hotly. "You go too far, M. Berault."

"De Berault, if you please," I objected, eyeing him sternly. "My family has born the de as long as yours, M. de Pombal."

He could not deny that and he answered, "As you please," at the same time restraining his friend by a gesture. "But none the less, take my advice," he continued. "The cardinal has forbidden dueling, and this time he means it! You have been in trouble once and gone free. A second time it may fare worse with you. Let this gentleman go, therefore, M. de Berault. Besides—why, shame upon you, man!" he exclaimed hotly; "he is but a lad!"

Two or three who stood behind me applauded that. But I turned and they met my eye; and they were as mum as mice. "His age is his own concern," I said grimly. "He was old enough a while ago to insult me."

"And I will prove my words!" the lad cried, exploding at last. He had spirit enough, and the marquis had had hard work to restrain him so long. "You do me no service, M. de Pombal," he continued, pettishly shaking off his friend's hand. "By your leave, this gentleman and I will settle this matter."

"That is better," I said, nodding dryly, while the marquis stood aside, frowning and baffled. "Permit me to lead the way."

Zaton's eating-house stands scarcely a hundred paces from St. Jacques la Boucherie, and half the company went thither with us. The evening was wet, the light in the streets was waning, the streets themselves were dirty and slippery. There were few passers in the Rue St. Antoine; and our party, which earlier in the day must have attracted notice and a crowd, crossed unmarked and entered without interruption the paved triangle which lies immediately behind the church. I saw in the distance one of the cardinal's guard loitering in front of the scaffolding round the new Hotel Richelieu; and the sight of the uniform gave us pause for a moment. But it was too late to repent.

The Englishman began at once to strip off his clothes. I closed mine to the throat, for the air was chilly. At that moment, while we stood preparing and most of the company seemed a little inclined to stand off from me, I felt a hand on my arm, and, turning, saw the dwarfish tailor at whose house in the Rue Savonneris I lodged at the time. The fellow's presence was unwelcome, to say the least of it; and though for want of better company I had sometimes encouraged him to be free with me at home, I took that to be no reason why I should be plagued with him before gentlemen. I shook him off, therefore, hoping by a frown to silence him.

He was not to be easily put down, however. And perforce I had to speak to him. "Afterwards, afterwards," I said. "I am engaged now."

"For God's sake don't Sir!" was the poor fool's answer. "Don't do it! You will bring a curse on the house. He is but a lad, and—"

"You, too!" I exclaimed, losing patience. "Be silent, you scum! What do you know about gentlemen's quarrels? Leave me; do you hear?"

"But the cardinal!" he cried in a quavering voice. "The cardinal, M. de Berault? The last man you killed is not forgotten yet. This time he will be sure to—"

"Do you hear?" I hissed. The fellow's impudence passed all bounds. It was as bad as his croaking. "Begone!" I said. "I suppose you are afraid he will kill me, and you will lose your money?"

Frison fell back at that almost as if I had struck him, and I turned to my adversary who had been awaiting my motions with impatience. God knows he did look young; as he stood with his head bare and his fair hair drooping over his smooth woman's forehead—a mere lad fresh from the College of Burgundy, if they have such a thing in England. I felt a sudden chill as I looked at him: a qualm, a tremor, a presentiment. What was it the little tailor had said? That I should—but there, he did not know. What did he know of such things? If I let this pass I must kill a man a day or leave Paris and the eating-house, and starve.

"A thousand pardons," I said gravely, as I drew and took my place. "A dun. I am sorry that the poor devil caught me so inopportunely. Now, however, I am at your service."

He saluted, and we crossed swords and began. But from the first I had no doubt of what the result would be. The slippery stones and fading light gave him, it is true, some chance, some advantage, more than he deserved; but I had no sooner felt his sword than I knew that he was no swordsman. Possibly he had taken half-a-

"SHAME!"

dozen lessons in rapier art, and practiced what he learned with an Englishman as heavy and awkward as himself. But that was all. He made a few wild, clumsy rushes, parrying wildly. When I had foiled these, the danger was over, and I held him at my mercy.

I played with him a little while, watching the sweat gather on his brow, and the shadow of the church-tower fall deeper and darker, like the shadow of doom on his face. Not out of cruelty—God knows I have never erred in that direction!—but because, for the first time in my life, I felt a strange reluctance to strike the blow. The curls clung to his forehead; his breath came and went in gasps; I heard the men behind me murmur, and one or two of them drop an oath; and then I slipped—slipped, and was down in a moment on my right side, my elbow striking the pavement so sharply that the arm grew numb to the wrist.

He held off! I heard a dozen voices cry, "Now! now you have him!" But he held off. He stood back and waited with his breast heaving and his point lowered, until I had risen and stood again on my guard.

"Enough! enough!" a rough voice behind me cried. "Don't hurt the man after that."

"On guard, Sir!" I answered coolly—for he seemed to waver. "It was an accident. It shall not avail you again."

Several voices cried "Shame!" and one, "You coward!" But the Englishman stepped forward, a fixed look in his blue eyes. He took his place without a word. I read in his drawn white face that he had made up his mind to the worst, and his courage won my admiration. I would gladly and thankfully have set one of the lookers-on—any of the lookers-on—in his place; but that could not be. So I thought of Zaton's closed to me, of Pombal's insult, of the sneers and slights I had long kept at the sword's point; and, pressing him suddenly in a heat of affected anger, I thrust strongly over his guard, which had grown feeble, and ran him through the chest.

When I saw him lying, laid out on the stones with his eyes half shut, and his face glimmering white in the dusk—not that I saw him thus long, for there were a dozen kneeling around rim in a twinkling—I felt an unwonted pang. It passed, however, in a moment. For I found myself confronted by a ring of angry faces—of men who, keeping at a distance, hissed and threatened me.

They were mostly canaille, who had gathered during the fight, and had viewed all that passed from the farther side of the railings. While some snarled and raged at me like wolves, calling me "Butcher!" and "Cut-throat!" and the like, or cried out that Berault was at his trade again, others threatened me with the vengeance of the cardinal, flung the edict in my teeth, and said with glee that the guard was coming—they would see me hanged yet.

"His blood is on your head!" one cried furiously. "He will be dead in an hour. And you will swing for him! Hurrah!"

"Begone to your kennel!" I answered, with a look which sent him a yard backwards, though the railings were between us. And I wiped my blade carefully, standing a little apart. For—well, I could understand it—it was one of those moments when a man is not popular.

But I was not to be outdone in sang-froid. I cocked my hat, and drawing my cloak over my shoulders, went out with a swagger which drove the curs from the gate before I came within a dozen paces of it. The rascals outside fell back as quickly, and in a moment I was in the street. Another moment and I should have been clear of the place and free to lie by for a while, when a sudden scurry took place round me. The crowd fled way into the gloom, and in a hand-turn a dozen of the cardinal's guard closed round me.

I had some acquaintance with the officer in command and he saluted me civilly. "This is a bad business, M. de Berault," he said. "The man is dead they tell me."

"Neither dying nor dead," I answered lightly. "If that be all, you may go home again."

"With you," he replied with a grin, "certainly. And as it rains, the sooner the better. I must ask you for your sword, I am afraid."

"Take it," I said, with the philosophy which never deserts me. "But the man will not die."

"I hope that may avail you," he answered in a tone I did not like. "Left wheel, my friends! To the Chatelet! March!"

"There are worse places," I said, and resigned myself to fate. After all, I had been in prison before, and learned that only one jail lets no prisoner escape.

But when I found that my friend's orders were to hand me over to the watch, and that I was to be confined like any common jail-bird caught cutting a purse or slitting a throat, I confess my heart sank. If I could get speech with the cardinal, all would be well; but if I failed in this, or if the case came before him in strange guise, or he were in a hard mood himself, then it might go ill with me. The edict said, death!

And the lieutenant at the Chatelet did not put himself to much trouble to hearten me. "What! again, M. de Berault?" he said, raising his eyebrows as he received me at the gate, and recognized me by the light of the brazier which his men were just kindling outside. "You are a very bold man, Sir, or a very foolhardy one, to come here again. The old business, I suppose?"

"Yes, but he is not dead," I answered coolly. "He has a trifle—a mere scratch. It was behind the church of St. Jacques."

"He looked dead enough," my friend the guardsman interposed. He had not yet gone.

"Bah!" I answered scornfully. "Have you ever known me to make a mistake? When I kill a man, I kill him. I put myself to pains, I tell you, not to kill this Englishman. Therefore he will live."

"I hope so," said the lieutenant, with a dry smile. "And you had better hope so, too, M. de Berault. For if not—"

"Well?" I said, somewhat troubled. "If not, what, my friend?"

"I fear he will be the last man you will fight," he answered. "And even if he lives, I would not be too sure, my friend. This time the cardinal is determined to put it down."

"He and I are old friends," I said confidently.

"So I have heard," he answered, with a short laugh. "I think the same was said of Chalais. I do not remember that it saved his head."

This was not reassuring. But worse was to come. Early in the morning orders were received that I should be treated with especial strictness, and I was given the choice between irons and one of the cells below level. Choosing the latter, I was left to reflect upon many things; among others, on the queer and uncertain nature of the cardinal, who loved, I knew, to play with a man as a cat with a mouse; and on the ill effects which sometimes attend a high chest-thrust, however carefully delivered. I only rescued myself at last from these and other unpleasant reflections by obtaining the loan of a pair of dice; and the light being just enough to enable me to reckon the throws, I amused myself for hours by casting them on certain principles of my own. But a long run again and again upset my calculations; and at last brought me to the conclusion that a run of bad luck may be so persistent as to see out the most sagacious player. This was not a reflection very welcome to me at the moment.

Nevertheless, for three days it was all the company I had. At the end of that time the knave of a jailer who attended me, and who had never grown tired of telling me, after the fashion of his kind, that I should be hanged, came to me with a less assured air. "Perhaps you would like a little water?" he said civilly.

"Why, rascal?" I asked.

"To wash with," he answered.

"I asked for some yesterday, and you would not bring it," I grumbled. "However, better late than never. Bring it now. If I must hang, I will hang like a gentleman. But, depend upon it, the cardinal will not serve an old friend so scurvy a trick."

"You are to go to him," he answered, when he came back with the water.

"What? To the cardinal?" I cried.

"Yes," he answered.

"Good!" I exclaimed, and in my joy I sprang up at once, and began to refresh my dress. "So all this time I have been doing him an injustice. Vive Monseigneur! I might have known it."

"Don't make too sure!" the man answered spitefully. Then he went on: "I have something else for you. A friend of yours left it at the gate," he added. And he handed me a packet.

"Quite so!" I said, reading his rascally face aright. "And you kept it as long as you dared—as long as you thought I should hang, you knave! Was not that so? But there, do not lie to me. Tell me instead which of my friends left it." For, to confess the truth, I had not so many friends at this time; and ten good crowns—the packet contained no less a sum—argued a pretty staunch friend, and one of whom a man might be proud.

The knave sniggered maliciously. "A crooked, dwarfish man left it," he said. "I doubt I might call him a tailor and not be far out."

"Chut!" I answered; but I was a little out of countenance. "I understand. An honest fellow enough, and in debt to me! I am glad he remembered. But when am I to go, friend?"

"In an hour," he answered sullenly. Doubtless he had looked to get one of the crowns; but I was too old a hand for that. If I came back I could buy his services; and if I did not I should have wasted my money.

[To Be Continued.]

TO THE SCHOOLGIRLS

GIVE THE UNPOPULAR TEACHER A CHANCE.

Schoolgirls Often Prejudice Themselves Unreasonably Against a Teacher — The Native Diffidence and Shyness of Some Teachers Make Them Appear Stiff and Stern — Unprepossessing Teachers Often Heroines—Girls Have a Way of Worshiping the Teacher with the Lovely Eyes—Charm Is Capital —Give a New Teacher Your Confidence.

BY MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

Two bright heads were bent together over the same book. As they reached the last page Susan looked at Penelope and sighed.

"There," she said, "that is ended. We shall recite to-morrow to dear Miss M., and then next week will see us in Miss B.'s classroom, and good-by to good times for six months. Every girl who has ever been with Miss B. fairly hates her, unless she happens to be one of her pets. She has pets, and they may do anything, but the rest of the class are always getting demerits and being scolded and made to do extra work. I wish I could be Rip Van Winkle and sleep straight through the next grade. Miss W., who has the class higher than Miss B., is a darling. But one can't reach her without having to undergo the misery of the class below."

"Aren't you exaggerating?" asked Penelope. "I have seen Miss B. a number of times, and she looks harmless. I cannot understand why she is so unpopular. The teachers appear to find her pleasant."

"Oh, she is pleasant enough with them and with visiting parents," exclaimed Sue. "It is only her own girls to whom she is a tyrant. You have not lived here very long, but I have gone through this school, from the kindergarten up, and so have my sisters. Lucy and Mildred and their friends have the same opinion that I have. Everybody dreads Miss B."

Penelope's dark eyes grew thoughtful. "Well, Sue," she said, "my father has always taught me to value fair play, and it does not look to me like fair play to begin in a new class with one's mind made up that she is going to dislike the teacher. That creates a false situation at the outset. Why should we blindly accept what other people say without waiting to see for ourselves where the truth of the matter lies? Poor Miss B. has a hard road to travel, if the girls do not trust her before they have given her the slightest trial. I, for one, shall do my work in the best way I can, and I shall try to love Miss B. and to make her love me."

Susan gave her head a toss. "I predict, Penelope, that you will be a favorite," she said, scornfully.

"Not at all, but I have a conscience, and I am going to give my teacher the benefit of a chance. I wish you would join me. Perhaps if you and I take the lead, some of the others will follow, and Miss B. for once may have the pleasure of teaching a class who are not determined to misunderstand her intentions and who are not doing what they can to make her work hard. I believe in making my teacher's end easy, if I can. Mother was a teacher before her marriage, and she has told me a good deal about the seamy side of a teacher's life."

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Penelope had in her girlish wisdom caught the thread of a clew that had tangled itself and led far back into the years during which the unpopular teacher had occupied her chair. Miss B. was exceptionally well equipped, a student painstaking and profound, the graduate of one college and the successful prize-winner in post-graduate work in another, she lacked the magnetism which in itself makes some women adorable and adored. In truth, she was more and more afraid of the girls she taught; her native diffidence and shyness made her seem stiff and stern; she encrusted herself as diffident people often do in a chain-armor of reserve. She recoiled from the unspoken criticism of the girls who sat before her, and though she honestly tried she was seldom able to make them feel that she cared for them personally. They supposed that in her view they were so many pegs in a row or pawns on a chessboard, and they resented the impersonality of her near-sighted gaze. Girls are sometimes very heartless, and instead of feeling pitiful when occasionally they saw a quiver of pain cross Miss B.'s countenance, such a token of sensitiveness on her part only made them dislike her the more. In her endeavor to be just and to exact the best work of which the class was capable, she often went too far and marked too severely any failure. If right relations are not existent between teacher and scholars it is very difficult for either to accomplish much. Often it would be for the benefit of all concerned were the teacher to be transplanted to a new environment where she could begin unhampered by unfriendly traditions.

If a teacher in the depths of her own soul is aware that she is no disciplinarian, she probably makes efforts in the direction where she is weak, and the result is a continual conflict between her class and herself. The resistance may not be open, but it is always ready to break out like a smouldering fire. Nothing on earth is harder to vanquish than a prejudice, and the less reasonable it be the more stubborn it probably is in maintaining its ground.

I wish I could persuade girls to imitate Penelope and be fair to the unpopular teacher in whose interest I am holding a brief. She may not be happy and at ease in her home life. In the background there may be an ailing father or mother whose welfare is a matter of deep anxiety to her, and whose care robs her of sleep. For instance, I know a teacher rather unpopular in the classroom, who for several years lost half of her night's rest in sitting up with and ministering to an invalid sister. There was no one else to take her place, and in consequence she brought with her to school an atmosphere of fatigue which made itself felt without her knowledge. Irritability is often born of weariness.

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Girls are by the way of worshiping teachers because of little externals that have not very much to do with the teacher's efficiency. A teacher who has lovely eyes and beautiful hair, and the suspicion of a dimple when she smiles, or who wears pretty things and is very attractive as to waists and stocks, has a great advantage over her plainer associate, who is indifferent to dress.

On the whole, I sympathize with girls in admiring the teacher who is invariably immaculate and tidy, and who has about her the bright attractiveness of perfect health and the beauty that is typical of womanly goodness. It is our duty whether we are girls in our teens or women beyond them always to look as charming and to behave as amiable as we can. When the unpopular teacher forgets this fact or ignores it, when she is willfully eccentric or lapses into mannerisms that are awkward and ungainly, she sacrifices part of her capital and makes it a foregone conclusion that she will not succeed as she ought.

But I put it to every one of you. Is it fair to start new work with a new teacher without being at least willing to give her your confidence? Or if you are already in a class and do not like your teacher, is it never worth while to be honest and candid and inquire if you are not just a little bit to blame for the state of things yourselves? In this world a lot of trouble springs from misunderstandings that might as well never come to the front, and people who should be good friends stand aloof and never get acquainted because they let a trifling and non-essential thing keep them apart.

A very thoughtful writer has said that in every human soul there is an innermost room, and that if we could discover it we should learn secrets that we never find out when we are only in the outer courts. This may be too philosophical for you, dear girls, but I want you to believe that there is something very sweet about the most unpopular teacher you have ever had, if you will take pains to search for it.

"There's so much good in the worst of us,
And so much bad in the best of us,
That it ill behooves any of us
To talk about the rest of us."

A SIMPLE PRETTY BODICE.

Full Directions for Making and About the Kinds and Quantity of Materials Required.

Here is a simple and pretty bodice for making to a dress of woolen material. It has a tight-fitting lining fastening down the center front; to this the lace vest is attached. It is sewn to the right front and made to hook over to the left. The material back is tucked three times down the

BODICE FOR AFTERNOON DRESS.

center before being set to the lining; the fronts are also tucked from the shoulders to the bust. The left front wraps the right, and is ornamented with tiny velvet buttons. The collar is faced with velvet, and fans of cream soft lace fall from under the ends in front. Leg-of-mutton sleeves with velvet cuffs, above which are sewn tiny buttons on the outside of arm. The shaped waistband is of material. Materials required: Two yards 46 inches wide, two yards lining one-quarter yard lace, and one half yard velvet.

THE HOME DOCTOR.

To soothe the pain of a bruised finger hold the damaged finger in hot water. It will relieve the pain more quickly than any other remedy.

Cure for Warts.—To cure warts on the hands, rub a little castor oil on them after washing the hands. A little should also be put on at night. After a few applications, the warts will begin to dry up.

Food for Nervous People.—As a rule, salt meat is not adapted to the requirements of nervous people, as nutritious juices go into the brine to a great extent. Fish of all kinds is good for them. Raw eggs, contrary to the common opinion, are not as digestible as those that have been well cooked. Good bread, sweet butter and lean meat are the best food for the nerves. People troubled with insomnia and nervous starting from sleep and sensations of falling can often be cured by limiting themselves to a diet of milk alone for a time. An adult should take a pint at a meal, and take four meals a day. People with weakened nerves require frequently a larger quantity of water than those whose nerves and brains are strong. It aids the digestion of these by making it soluble, and seems to have a direct tonic effect. —Good Literature.

To Friends in Mourning.

Cards of invitation should be sent to acquaintances and friends that are in mourning, giving them the privilege of declining.

A RIGHT TO GOOD ROADS.

No Industrial Class in Country More Entitled to Help Than Farming Communities.

If this is a government of, by and for the people, it is time to cast about and see whether its functions are being faithfully exercised. There are ninety million people in the United States, and more than one-third of these are engaged in agricultural pursuits. Upon this latter class all the others depend for the necessaries of life, and according as conditions are good or bad about the agricultural classes, all the others are affected. Prosperity in the farming world means prosperity in the industrial and the mercantile world. When the farmers suffer, the disaster reaches in some measure to every man, woman and child in the country. There is no way to honestly put out of sight the interdependence of our people, and yet the one class that could live absolutely without the existence of any of the other classes is the farming community. In view of these self-evident truths it does seem that the industrial and mercantile classes, with the professional people, would be mindful of everything tending to make rural life profitable and pleasant. The present highway conditions form the most serious drawback that confronts the country to-day. In no other civilized country do like conditions prevail. Wherever government has intervened for good highways, there the people are happiest. The highways afford to the rural population not alone the means of communication with the business world, but the means of reaching church houses and school houses, and all that they have of social intercourse and amusement. It should be a matter of general public concern to have the highways in all the states put in first-class condition. The states of themselves can never establish satisfactory systems of roads, nor should they be expected to. The cost of road construction should be equitably distributed, and this can only be done through national aid.

THE ASPARAGUS BEETLE.

Suggestion as to Effective Method of Preventing Injury to Plants.

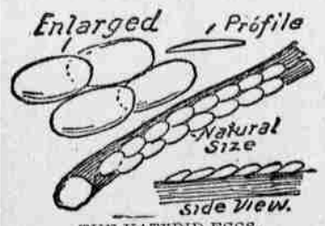
The only effective way to prevent injuries to asparagus by asparagus beetle larvae is to destroy the eggs before they hatch, says the Orange (Ind.) Farmer. The first eggs are laid on the young shoots; later on the grown plant. They are black, about 1-16 inch long and set nearly at right angles to the stem; so, though small, they are fairly conspicuous. In a few days they hatch into slimy, greenish slugs with black heads, legs and dots on the body.

The simplest way to manage is to leave a few inferior shoots for the females to lay eggs on. When four or five days old these shoots must be cut and burned and others allowed to replace them. To simplify this cutting and to reduce to a minimum, the chance of missing any plants, those allowed to remain should be all in certain parts of the field on certain days. The field should be divided into four or three equal parts, depending on the frequency of cutting. At the first cutting the trap plants should be left in the first section and so on. In each other section every punky stalk should be cut with the marketable ones and burned. Every trap plant in any section must be cut on the fourth or fifth day and the plan continued through the cutting season. This will completely protect the field from late attack and reduce possible infestation the next season, provided no asparagus is allowed to grow in fence rows and waste places and provided neighbors are as careful.

KATYDID EGGS.

What They Look Like and How They Are Attached to Foliage—Insect Does Little Damage.

The illustration shows a deposit of katydid eggs on a grape vine. This insect is a common species through southern and central United States, but very seldom causes serious damage. The eggs are of a slate-brown color and are laid in remarkably regular, double rows, with broken joints as shown in the illustration. They are laid on the twigs of trees in the north, as the in-



THE KATYDID EGGS.

sect passes the winter in the egg stage. In the south they are laid on the edges of leaves, frequently a row on each surface, says the Ohio Farmer. The insect has two generations in the south. When the eggs are laid, the surface of the twig is first roughened by the jaws. The eggs are then laid, one after another, the successive ones being pushed for a short distance in under the preceding. The number laid by each female varies from 100 to 150. In the spring the egg splits along the top and the young katydid emerges, very pale in color. Mr. Scudder, who has made a study of the song of the katydid, says the night song and the day song differ.

Two Kinds of Fruit Growers.

Roland Morrill, the great peach grower of Michigan, says that he never attends a meeting of fruit growers that he does not receive benefit. He represents a class of successful men that know they can always learn something they do not already know. Another fruit grower said: "I don't care to attend these meetings. I know all about fruit growing." He represents a class of men (generally unsuccessful), who imagine there is no knowledge outside of that possessed by themselves. A man to be successful in fruit growing must lay hold of every kind of horticultural information that can be reached.

IN OTHER LANDS.

An electric railway will probably soon connect Moscow with St. Petersburg.

In the insane asylums of Germany more than a third of the patients owe their condition to strong drink.

Last year there were 39,211 millions matches sold in France, bringing into that nation's treasury $5,216,950, this being a state monopoly.

A man of 80, elected a judge for Frutigen, Switzerland, is to go through a university course in order to enable him to pass the examination required by law.

A proposal to enact that no newspaper shall be edited, composed or printed from Saturday midnight until sunrise on Monday morning, has been negatived in the French senate.

Denmark holds the record among nations for thriftiness. Her inhabitants have, on an average, £19 9s. apiece in the savings banks; English people have only £3 2s. a head.

In Australian gold mines it is considered that ventilation becomes bad when the proportion of oxygen falls below 20 per cent., or less than 70 cubic feet of air a minute is supplied for every man working in a mine.

The city of London's chief inspector of weights and measures reports that the weight of all loads of coal tested last year was satisfactory, and that "in most cases the weight exceeded the amount specified on the ticket."

One of the labor party's members of the new house of commons lately received from a constituent who thought he had a grievance to which the government should give attention, a letter of no less than 1,700 closely-written pages.

IN OCEAN DEPTHS.

Some of the most beautiful sights are found in the sea—the coral reefs and the sunken gardens, filled with strange marine plants. Some marine animals live only in the purest water, others only in the foulest water; for every condition there is a life to fit it.

In all ocean basins, hills and ridges, as well as troughs and deep holes, occur, and the bottom is covered with the skeletons of marine animals, changed by time into slime and stone. Some of the animals of the ocean have no eyes, having no need of them; others have a hundred eyes.

The largest animal and the tiniest animal are found in the sea. In places the sea is 30,000 feet deep. Its average depth is over 12,000 feet. Twice every 24 hours the water rises and falls. At the entrance to the Bay of Fundy the rise at spring tide is no less than 70 feet. The natural power that controls the tide is a tremendous one.

And the plant life in the ocean is almost as remarkable as the animal life. Learned men have been studying it for centuries and are only beginning to understand it. If you want to be interested as no novel can interest you, procure a book telling in a simple manner of the life in the seas. There are plenty of such books writtten for the people rather than for scientists.

FLOATING FACTS.

Bank of England notes cost a halfpenny apiece to produce.

The Church of England has an income of £15,000,000 a year.

In the Indian ocean only 730 out of 16,300 islands are inhabited.

In March 1,646 Japanese left the Hawaiian islands for the Pacific coast.

A watch taken to the top of Mount Blanc will gain 30 seconds in 24 hours.

A ray of light could move eight times around the globe between the tick of a watch.

Rain is never known to fall in the region between the first and second cataracts of the Nile.

Never in the history of parliament have the full number of members been present at one sitting.

Wood intended to be made into pianos requires to be kept 40 years to be in perfect condition.

It is estimated that £80,000,000 worth of British treasure lies sunk along the route from England to India.

There are more accidental deaths from drowning every year in most countries than from any other cause.

His Own Business.

This anecdote was told by John Graham Brooks: "One of the brightest replies I ever heard came from a lad in my neighborhood, who was being quizzed about his father's accomplishments, and was asked: 'What does your father know, anyway?' There was no hesitation in the answer: 'I don't believe he knows much of anything except his own business; but he knows that.'"

Reversing It.

The meek and lowly tramp meandered up to the old farm gate and asked for a raw turnip with which to appease his hunger.

But the horny-handed son of toil was onto his job, and all the hobo got was a turndown.—Chicago Daily News.

Different.

"Bangley always speaks of his wife as 'dearest.'"

"Yes, but you ought to hear how he speaks 'to' her."—Detroit Free Press.